

I love you to the moon and back

Welcome to the RelationKit mindfulness series. We hear the saying “I love you to the moon and back” a lot when we have children. We may even say it to our children and feel the strength of our love for them as we do.

In this practice we will build up our own loving kindness, because without that we cannot fully and freely love others, and then we’ll connect heart to heart with our children. This can be a very powerful practice, building positive emotions, empathy and compassion.

So, make sure that you are warm and really comfortable in your posture. Close your eyes if that feels okay, and bring your attention to your breath, breathing in and just being aware of your breath flowing in, and breathing out, and just being of your breath flowing out. And then allowing your attention to drop down to your belly, feeling your belly rise and soften with each breath.

And as your breath allows you to rest in a calmer place of 'being', and a warm loving awareness begins to spread over you now, set a gentle wish for your practice, for example, to grow the seeds of loving kindness and gratitude in your body and mind so that you can more freely send these positive emotions out to your child or children.

And from having your awareness at your belly can you move your attention to your chest now, to feel the breath here for a few moments, and from really feeling your breathing chest moving, gently begin to invite your awareness deeper into your heart area - the centre of your chest - feeling your heart. Your breath is softening your heart space. As you breathe, let your heart be soft now - a gentle tenderness there - feeling or hearing your heartbeat maybe.

Now begin to invite a pea sized ball of warm white light to appear there. Feel as though this ball of light is shining through your heart, growing, and it begins to bring with it love, and warmth and gratitude in your heart. It touches and is felt at your heart centre, and there’s a growing sense of love and happiness towards yourself.

Saying silently or out loud to yourself now, if you prefer:

May I be filled with loving kindness

May I be free from harm and conflict

May I be well in body and mind

May I be at peace and happy.

Repeat these phrases until any feelings that come with them sink into your being, filling your own cup up first before you can share whole heartedly your love with others. Allow for any thoughts or awkward feelings to arise. Acknowledge them, breathe with them, and just continue to recite them gently if it still feels okay to do so.

And as you do, feel that loving light flow out from your heart centre. See that warm light start to spin like a Catherine Wheel, as it sends light around your body, through your chest, down towards your belly, out through your arms and legs, and then further, out of your pores of your skin to your child or children. Imagine that wellspring of warm white light, your loving kindness, travelling out to your children and being received them, saying silently or out loud to your child or children now:

May you be filled with loving kindness

May you be free from harm and conflict

May you be well in body and mind

May you be at peace and happy.

Again, be open to anything that arises that may try to distract you from your practice, and invite your attention back to the phrases of loving kindness, and the feelings that they bring up for you.

Continuing to repeat those phrases silently, sending them gently towards your child or children, no matter what comes up for you. Open your heart of kindness, love and appreciation to them, and see them clearly receiving this light - this unconditional love, warmth and compassion – and seeing them experiencing freedom from suffering.

Notice how this offering of loving kindness from your heart to theirs feels in body and mind, maybe like a wave or a flow of love out to them, Maybe you just feel that deep connection with them now.

And if you wish, allowing the saying “I love you to the moon and back” to ride on the wave of your love towards them. When we return to love, we are always connected.

Now begin to draw the light very gradually back towards your own heart. Imagine the light melting back into your heart, until only a small ball of white light is there now, and then dissolve even that, but keeping the feeling - the source of love - at your heart. Keep that for yourself.

Now reflect in these last moments on how grateful you are for you child or children; these gifts, or treasured gems that have been given to you from this world. A gentle reminder of why you are doing this series, and how important these practices of self-care are for you and your lovely family.

Take a little more time if you wish feeling the love flowing from you heart to your children's.

Then, whenever the time feels right, come back to your breath. Take in some deeper inhales and longer exhalations, and just in your own time slowly blink your eyes open.

Lots of love to you and your family today.

Take care of yourself until next time.